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LETTER DATED 30 APRIL 1982 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND
TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF
THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour, with reference to the letter dated 29 April 1982 from the Permanent Representative of Argentina (S/15014), to state the following in reply.

First, the Argentine assertion that the United Kingdom's right of self-defence "cannot be invoked when the Security Council had adopted measures for the maintenance of international peace and security, the first provision of which demands precisely the immediate cessation of hostilities" cannot be accepted. It hardly lies in the mouth of Argentina to invoke the terms of Security Council resolution 502 (1982) when it is Argentina which has persistently refused by word and deed to comply with the terms of that resolution for no less than 27 days. The fact that Argentina has not withdrawn its armed forces from the Falkland Islands, contrary to the demand in paragraph 2 of resolution 502 (1982), is sufficient to indicate that the decision of the Security Council has not, in fact, been effective to restore international peace and security because of Argentina's refusal to comply. Moreover, as regards paragraph 1 of that resolution, the telegram dated 13 April 1982 from the British Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary of State to the Foreign Minister of Peru makes clear that "the armed confrontation was initiated by the Argentine action in seizing the Falkland Islands and that it was to this point that the first paragraph of resolution 502 (1982) ... was directed" (S/14974). For these reasons, the above assertion is totally devoid of merit.

Secondly, the allegation that the United Kingdom is "unleashing a new colonialist war" can only be described as preposterous, coming as it does from Argentina, which has unleashed hostilities by its attack on the Falkland Islands on 2 April 1982 in defiance of the Security Council's appeal of 1 April 1982 (S/14944) and which is now attempting to subjugate the Falkland Islanders - a peaceful and permanent people who have threatened no one. In other words, it is Argentina, by its acts of aggression, which is attempting to subject a people to alien domination, to sweep away their democratically chosen political, social and cultural institutions, to impose a new language and new educational principles and to alter their way of life.

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Finally, the United Kingdom has never argued that it was assuming "the task of executing" a "mandate from the Security Council". The true position is that, in the face of Argentina's flagrant and open violation of resolution 502 (1982), the United Kingdom is exercising its inherent right of self-defence, for which no mandate from the Security Council is required by the terms of the Charter of the United Nations.

I should be grateful if you would arrange for this letter to be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) A. D. PARSONS
